

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Below is a complete listing of the claims. Claim 24 is presented as the *only* independent claim.

Claim 1. (*Canceled*)

Claim 2. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim 24, wherein comprising:
~~an outer sole and an external upper covering a user's foot and lower leg, the external upper comprising a flexible frame made of a flexible, substantially non-stretchable material, arranged along determinate directions of forces transmitted during use of the boot, said flexible frame being affixed to both the external upper and the outer sole, the flexible frame comprising a said dorsal portion extends extending from the outer sole substantially up to a top end of the external upper, and at least one lateral arm laterally connecting the dorsal portion to one side of the boot, said lateral arm spaced above the outer sole at the dorsal portion and extending forwardly from the dorsal portion and connected to the outer sole forwardly of the dorsal portion.~~

Claim 3. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim + 24, wherein said at least one lateral portion arm comprises two substantially symmetrical lateral arms.

Claim 4. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim + 24, wherein each said lateral portion arm is fixed to the outer sole by a connecting lug, substantially in said an area of the metatarsophalangeal joint of the foot.

Claim 5. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim + 24, wherein at least said one lateral portion includes ~~arm~~ comprises a tightening arrangement.

Claim 6. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim + 24, wherein the dorsal portion laterally comprises at least one lug having a tightening arrangement and is on a level with the top of the external upper.

Claim 7. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim + 24, wherein the dorsal portion laterally comprises two substantially symmetrical lugs.

9 Claim 8. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim + 24, wherein the flexible frame is fixed, at each of its lower ends, to the external upper and to the outer sole.

Claim 9. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim + 24, wherein for a conventional assembly, with the upper having a lasting allowance between an insole and the outer sole, each of the lower ends of the frame is fixed to the lasting allowance.

Claim 10. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim + 24, wherein each of the lower ends of the frame is fixed by a seam on the lower end of the external upper.

Claim 11. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim + 24, wherein the frame is fixed on the external upper by a seam.

Claim 12. (*Original*) A sports boot according to claim 3, wherein each lateral arm is fixed to the upper, and to the sole, respectively, only by its connecting lugs and conserves an entire elastically deformable free portion.

Claim 13. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim 24, ~~especially for gliding sports, comprising an outer sole and an external upper overlying the outer sole and covering a user's foot and lower leg, the external upper comprising a flexible frame made of a substantially non stretchable material and affixed to the upper and sole, said flexible frame comprising a dorsal portion extending vertically at the rear of the lower leg and including a space between said dorsal portion and said outer sole, said flexible frame further comprising at least one lateral portion, extending laterally along the foot, connected to said dorsal portion and to the sole, at each of its ends, wherein the flexible frame of the external upper extends above the an ankle region to about a middle region of a tibia of the user.~~


Claim 14. (*Canceled*)

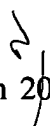
Claim 15. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot ~~, especially for gliding sports,~~ according to claim 14 24, wherein the flexible frame comprises lateral arms in the form of flat bands oriented so as to provide a predetermined moment of inertia during a forward bending.

Claim 16. (*Canceled*)

Claim 17. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim ~~16~~ 24, wherein the dorsal portion comprises a notch whose lower end opens out on ~~a~~ the recess between the dorsal portion and the outer sole.

Claim 18. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim ~~1~~ 24, wherein the dorsal portion constitutes a rear piece, and the dorsal portion including at least one lug, and at least one lateral arm constitutes a front piece, and wherein the front piece includes appropriate fixing means for fixing the front piece on the rear piece, at the level of the dorsal portion.

 Claim ⁹~~1~~9. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim ~~1~~ 24, wherein each external lateral arm is furthermore connected to the dorsal portion by a connecting lug oriented substantially along the flexion fold.

 Claim ~~2~~0. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim ~~1~~ 24, wherein the dorsal portion has a bottom portion that is flared so as to surround the heel.

Claim 21. (*Canceled*)

Claim 22. (*Canceled*)

Claim 23. (*Canceled*)

Claim 24. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot comprising:

an outer sole; and

an external upper overlying said outer sole to cover a user's foot and lower leg, said external upper comprising a flexible frame made of a substantially non-stretchable material and affixed to said external upper and said outer sole, said flexible frame comprising a dorsal portion extending upwardly above an ankle region at a rear of the lower leg, and further comprising at least one elongated lateral portion extending laterally forwardly from said dorsal portion, at least said lateral portion of said flexible frame being ^{outside} and spaced above said external sole, said lateral portion of said flexible frame being connected to said external sole ^{outside} proximate an area ^{adapted to receive} of a metatarsophalangeal joint of the user's foot, said flexible frame not extending through a lower surface of said outer sole.

Claim 25. (*Previously Added*) A sports boot according to claim 24, wherein said substantially non-stretchable material comprises a polymer.

Claim 26. (*Previously Added*) A sports boot according to claim 25, wherein said polymer comprises a member selected from the group consisting of polyvinylchloride, polyamide, polyethylene, and polyurethane.

Claim 27. (*Previously Added*) A sports boot according to claim 24, wherein said at least one lateral portion and said dorsal portion of said flexible frame are formed as unitary.

Claim 28. (*Canceled*)

Claim 29. (*Currently Amended*) A sports boot according to claim + 24, wherein the flexible frame is made of a non-leather material.

Claim 30. (*Previously Added*) A sports boot according to claim 29, wherein said material is a polymer.

Claim 31. (*Canceled*)

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Claim 32. (*Canceled*)

Claim 33. (*New*) A sports boot according to claim 24, wherein said dorsal portion of said flexible frame is spaced above said external sole.

Claim 34. (*New*) A sports boot according to claim 24, wherein said flexible frame is arranged external of said external upper.

Claim 35. (*New*) A sports boot according to claim 24, wherein said flexible frame is arranged internal of said external upper.
